

Dear friends,

Welcome to this 82<sup>nd</sup> FIG Congress in Baku!

It is my pleasure to return to this magnificent city following the FIG Council Meeting which was held here last year. It is a great privilege for us to hold such a prestigious sports forum in your country.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Azerbaijan Gymnastics Federation and, especially, to its president, Mehriban Aliyeva, who has extended such a warm welcome and provides us with such an excellent meeting environment.

I know that you, as a federation, are grateful to the FIG for our appreciation of your fantastic work. By the same token, we value all your efforts as we, the Gymnastics family, continue to promote and grow our sport globally.

As you know, we have major projects on the agenda that will guide our discussions. Here in Baku, we will decide on the implementation of the Gymnastics Ethics Foundation and on the official recognition of Parkour as an FIG discipline.

Following the awful sex abuse cases in the United States, which so shocked the world of Gymnastics, we at the FIG had to act, which is why we undertook an in-depth review of our policies and rules. Debating and deciding the future of the Ethics Foundation is, therefore, clearly of huge importance.

Our debate concerning the future of Parkour, following the first World Cup events that took place earlier this year, is also very significant, albeit for very different reasons.

I therefore count on you all to make this Congress a session of veritable constructive exchanges, worthy of this important decision-making body.

Wishing everyone a pleasant meeting.

With my warmest regards,

Morinari Watanabe